

# DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES

## ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES DIVISION

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Tamarack Woods, Phase I

3 SUNSET PLAZA, KALISPELL, MT 59901

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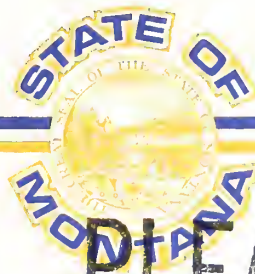


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THOMAS L. JUDGE, GOVERNOR

(406) 755-5521

A. C. KNIGHT, M.D., F.C.C.P., DIRECTOR



# PLEASE RETURN

May 7, 1980

To: B.C. McIntyre, M.D., Flathead Co. Health Officer  
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Governor's Office  
Somers-Lakeside Chamber of Commerce  
Lex Blood, Blackmer Lane, Columbia Falls

From: Stan C. Strom, R.S.  
Environmental Sciences Division  
Kalispell Regional Office

Subject: Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) for a subdivision known  
as Tamarack Woods, Phase I

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May 7, 1980

This is to notify you that a Preliminary Environmental Review (PER) has been completed by the staff of the Environmental Sciences Division, Kalispell Regional Office regarding Tamarack Woods, Phase I, a proposed 78 lot 54+ acre subdivision on the west side of Flathead Lake near Lakeside, Montana.

The subdivision proposal has been controversial locally, however it probably is of little regional interest except for those Western Montana people who exhibit concern with respect to any environmental circumstance in or around Flathead Lake.

You should also be aware that this evaluation is not a formal Environmental Impact Statement, but is instead a survey of possible problems which led to the ultimate decision that an Environmental Impact Statement is not warranted.

Any person, governmental agency or organization may obtain a copy of the PER by making a specific request to the Department. Any comments should also be directed to this office.

Respectfully submitted,

Stan C. Strom, R.S.  
Subdivision Bureau  
Environmental Sciences Division



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES  
Cogswell Building, Helena, Montana 59601  
(406)449-3946

PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW


Division/Bureau Environmental Sciences Division, Subdivision Bureau

Project or Application Tamarack Woods, Phase I in Flathead County, Montana

Description of Project Phase I of this subdivision involves 78 lots, 6 of which are multifamily (duplex) on 55.2+ acres in Section 18, Township 26 North, Range 20 West, Flathead County. Phase I plans include a community water system and onsite sewage disposal. The water system is to provide flows in excess of those required for normal domestic water and light irrigation, such flows to be in reserve for fire emergencies.

POTENTIAL IMPACT ON PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Terrestrial & aquatic life and habitats			XXXX			
2. Water quality, quantity and distribution		XXXX				see note 1
3. Geology & soil quality, stability and moisture			XXXX			
4. Vegetation cover, quantity and quality		XXXX				see note 2
5. Aesthetics			XXXX			
6. Air quality			XXXX			
7. Unique, endangered, fragile, or limited environmental resources					XXXX	
8. Demands on environmental resources of land, water, air & energy			XXXX			
9. Historical and archaeological sites					XXXX	



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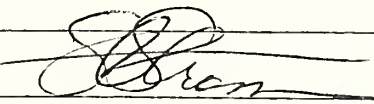
# POTENTIAL IMPACTS ON HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

	Major	Moderate	Minor	None	Unknown	Comments on Attached Pages
1. Social structures and mores				XXXX		
2. Cultural uniqueness and diversity				XXXX		
3. Local and state tax base & tax revenue		XXXX				see note 3
4. Agricultural or industrial production			XXXX			
5. Human health					XXXX	
6. Quantity and distribution of community and personal income					XXXX	
7. Access to and quality of recreational and wilderness activities			XXXX			
8. Quantity and distribution of employment				XXXX		
9. Distribution and density of population and housing	XXXX					see note 3
10. Demands for government services		XXXX				see note 3
11. Industrial & commercial activity			XXXX			
12. Demands for energy			XXXX			
13. Locally adopted environmental plans & goals		XXXX				see note 3
14. Transportation networks & traffic flows			XXXX			

Other groups or agencies contacted or which may have overlapping jurisdiction Flathead Co. Advisory Technical Staff, James Mohn

Individuals or groups contributing to this PER. W.O. Aikin, Water Quality Bureau, Kalispell

Recommendation concerning preparation of EIS Environmental Impact Statement Not Merited

PER Prepared by: 

Stan C. Strom, R.S.

Date: 5/8/80





## PRELIMINARY ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW

### TAMARACK WOODS PHASE I Flathead County, Montana

This proposed subdivision is  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile south of Lakeside on the west side of Flathead Lake, on a north facing slope. Access is primarily from Blacktail road near its' intersection with Old Highway 93, (see enclosed map).

Geologically, this area is composed of a surface veneer of glacial drift deposits of cobblestone, gravel silts and clays, over bedrock or fractured bedrock, (argillites). It would seem, based on well logs and the Highway 93 road cut along the eastern edge of the proposal that the overburden decreases in thickness near the higher elevation lots in the southern end of the Phase I plat. No soils and profile data has yet been submitted on those areas further south, even higher in elevation and steeper, which are presumed to be intended as a subsequent phase of this development. (The planning staff reviewed a further plan indicating development in this area.)

The extent to which clays or other hydraulic barriers exist in the lower soils profiles of Phase I was not adequately demonstrated in the first submittal on Phase I. Additional holes and observations are being done at the time of this writing. However, the 208 Water Quality Staff indicated, in the public hearing on this proposal, that the majority of the profile involved clay and silt. Engineering reports and the observations of the County Sanitarian conflict with the report of 208, in that both sources indicate soils higher in silt and sandy silt, but little evidence of clay.

Slope measurements at the drainfield sites indicate that nearly 1/3 of these sites are in excess of 15%. The significance of this is in part due to the fact that the lot sizes vary from .9 acre down to about .5 acre and the density is regarded as moderately high for an area of relatively steep slope. Steeper slopes tend to be poorer for drainfield sitings based on higher failure rate.

#### Note 1

The inherent limitations of this site for onsite sewage disposal relate to slope, cobblestone and what has been previously described as "clay". Our examination of soils profiles, those of the county sanitarian and additional soils profiles provided by the developer indicate quite clearly that gravelly silt and cobbly silt dominate nearly every area and that clay is scant in the profiles and not varved nor layered. Slope and cobblestone then become the major constraints to septic system suitability. These problems can be overcome by installation controls and rigorous enforcement of layout plans.



Storm water, on the other hand, will apparently be screened and flow generally northward along the roadside ditch to a pre-existing settling area for a minimal amount of detention and settling action. This pond is not within the subdivision area, however, and perpetuation of the treatment is in question since administrative control of this treatment area has not been demonstrated.

#### Note 2

A large amount of clearing of this area has already taken place. Most large trees have been removed and the remaining smaller trees and underbrush have been thinned. The trees left on the site are less than 6" in diameter mostly and provide little or no cover nor forage for wildlife. The erosion hazard has also been increased.

It is generally assumed, however, that this level of devastation would occur during construction if not sooner, and such impact has become common on private land even when not subdivided.

#### Note 3

(local and state tax base and revenue, demands for government services and locally adopted environmental plans and goals and distribution and density of population and housing are all dealt with in comments in note #3)

The moderate impacts here are related to impact on the Lakeside School System, population density "which is contrary to the Comprehensive Plan and the desires of the community," according to the Flathead County Planning Board, August 10, 1978. The load on the school district in such areas, usually precedes in time, the generation of support revenues for the district from increased assessments. Also school impacts are perceived as exceeding the revenues generated, i.e. they do not pay their way.

It is apparent that the desires of the community run contrary to this proposed density, and that the comprehensive plan designated this general area agricultural or forest. (The West Shore Flathead Lake Chamber of Commerce requested controls to designate this area agriculture and/or forest and in addition requested that should any deviation be requested, a public hearing be held and that the planning committee be advised.) The total environmental effect, however of breach of these recommendations is inflicted more on the planning concept itself than on public health or agricultural and forest land reserves. Conservation of forest land for food and fiber production to serve future generations may be a valid and worthwhile objective, but it is apparently not to be attained at the expense of private land owners.



Note 3 Cont.

Another potential impact identified in the earlier stages of review of this proposal, is the effect that such a high density development would have on the formation of a sewer district, a serious need in the area of "downtown" Lakeside. There are indications that the developer is willing to annex to any sewer district which is available, but none has as yet been formed. It may be possible to include some sort of "waiver of protest" into lot sales so that the lots in this development can be included in a sewer district if desired, at some point in the future when steps have been taken in that direction. Developed lots could be included in the district on a delayed basis if the viability of the project were in question, or in the event of onsite sewer failure. Therefore, with proper assurances from the developer, this potentially adverse effect can be ameliorated.





